RAYMOND, MISS., IN WAR TIMES.

Reminiscences by One Who Was a Child at the Time.

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I was only six years old when the war began, but I recall July 4, 1863, when Vicksburg surrendered, and May 12, 1863, when was fought the battle of Raymond, Miss. My first idea of soldiers must have been early in the spring of 1861, when it was reported in our little town of Raymond: "The soldiers are coming!" (I did not know what soldiers meant, and my mother told me they were men who were about to fight each other; so I called them "Fight each others.") Early that morning my mother had me gather a bunch of flowers to throw at the soldiers passing by; yet when they did come along, I was too bashful to throw it, although one of the soldiers called to me: "Give me that." My conscience hurt me for years for not throwing the bouquet to him.

Near the beginning of the war the ladies of Raymond gave two concerts for the benefit of the company that went from that town. One of the songs was that sweet old quartet, "Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming," sung by the Misses Calhoun, of Jackson, and their two brothers. There were also tableaux, and in one I was a fairy. The other concert was given in the courthouse, and "The Bonnie Blue Flag" was sung by several young ladies, each representing a Southern State and carrying its flag. After that our entertainments were few, for as the war went on news came of the death on the battlefield of so many of our brave young men, and so many families were in sorrow that no one had the heart to dance and sing. In 1862 my mother began to teach school, for she knew that if we were not victorious some one would have to make the living for the family; besides, she had to support our negro cook, who had four children. The rest of our slaves went to the Yankees.

Some time prior to July 4, 1863, several families refugeed to Raymond from Vicksburg to avoid the horrors of the siege and the shells from Yankee gunboats. Among these was the family of Mr. Walter Brooke (later U. S. Senator Brooke). These families brought from their homes some furniture.

My mother and Miss Martha Dabney were in the habit of taking long walks before breakfast, and sometime would walk toward Cooper's Wells, a summer resort four miles distant on the road to Jackson, or Bolton. One morning they had planned to walk in the direction of Utica, when Judge Dabney sent a note to say that as there were rumors of a battle he thought it best for them to postpone their walk. That was the day of the battle of Raymond, May 12, 1863. Of course there were more Yankee soldiers than Confederates, and we were defeated; but they had more killed and wounded than we. The day after the battle General Grant with "sixty thousand men" passed through Raymond on his way to Jackson, Miss. As they neared Jackson the home of General Freeman was passed. Miss Freeman stepped to the door with a Confederate flag in her hand and sang "Bonnie Blue Flag," whereupon the Yankees promptly burned down her house. This was only a beginning, for they burned so many houses in Jackson that the town was called "Chimneyville." The incident about Miss Freeman and the flag was told us by "Uncle Tom," the carriage driver of General Freeman. His wife, "Aunt Mandy," belonged to us. "Uncle Simon," carriage driver for my great-aunt, who lived in another town twelve miles distant, came one day with a message to my mother that a party of Yankee soldiers had visited a neighboring plantation, gone to the family vault, and taken therefrom a small metallic coffin containing the body of a baby, and kicked the coffin all over the yard. An account of this vandalism was afterwards published in a Mississippi paper. Some years later while looking through our family Bible I found a clipping telling of the incident.

One of the first things the ladies of Raymond did was to organize a sewing society for the benefit of the soldiers. The Episcopal church (St. Mark's) was the place of meeting, and the Misses Peyton, Dabney, Nelson, Gray, Belcher, Alston, Mrs. Gibbs, and my mother were prominent in the movement. From time to time boxes of clothing were sent to the soldiers. Our church bells were given to be made into cannon.

But to return to the battle of Raymond. The battle began early in the morning, and all day long people lined the streets,

GATHERING AT CONFEDERATE CEMETERY, RAYMOND, MISS., MAY 12, 1910. A MONUMENT IS TO BE BUILT THERE.

...to the boom of cannon and rattle of smaller fire-... The first wounded soldier I saw was a Yankee, a young ... He was brought into town riding behind one of our ... I remember the officer had red hair, and he leaned ... head on his left hand and held on to the captor with his ... I felt sincere pity for him, even though he was a Yan... Late in the afternoon the battle ended, and instead of ...ing into town by the roads and streets the swarming horde ...ging over gardens and flower beds. At the very first the ...Confederate wounded were housed in the courthouse and in the ...hbors of the Oak Tree Hotel; but soon they were all put ...in the courthouse, and the ladies of the town helped to nurse ...and care for our heroes. Every morning my mother and a ...servant went to the hospital with delicacies for the soldiers. I ...was always with my mother, and nothing passed me unnoticed. ...For instance, there was a Dr. Dysart in our hospital who had ...become the owner of a Yankee overcoat. I was a curly-headed ...girl and received much notice; but Dr. Dysart could not get ...me to make friends with him, so my mother asked me the ...reason, and it was understand when I explained that I thought ...he was a Yankee on account of his overcoat. The Yankees ...filled their wounded in four places—Odd Fellows Hall and the ...Methodist, Episcopal, and Baptist churches. A few danger... ...badly wounded soldiers occupied a private residence. Two of ...them died and were buried in the yard, but were afterwards ...transferred to the National Cemetery at Vicksburg.

On the day of the battle of Raymond we were very much ...amused by my grandmother, who kept on knitting socks for ...the soldiers. She did not look at her work, but kept on, and ...by dark had knitted a sock as long as a ladies' hose.

The first Confederate victory was celebrated in Raymond by ...the ringing of church bells. Miss Lizzie Dabney and my ...mother rushed next door to the Baptist church and rang the ...bell themselves.

My father died before the war, so I am not a lineal de...scendant of a Confederate soldier; but his brothers and my ...mother's brothers were in the war, as was every male rela...tive I had on either side over the age of fourteen. My claim ...as a Daughter of the Confederacy is good from these records; ...also my grandmother and my mother gave "loyal aid" to the ...cause, and my first husband, Private George Mixon Hayden, ...served through the whole four years.

The fall before the war my mother went to Vicksburg and ...bought a black silk velvet bonnet and a black silk velvet cloak, ...just imported from Paris. It was many a day before we could ...get anything of that kind again. * * * A countryman who ...sent several children to my mother's school let her have a ...small spring wagon and a one-eyed mule, which afterwards ...proved more valuable than money could have been; for when ...there were no groceries to be bought in town, Aunt Mandy ...would hitch up "Old Beck" and drive far into the backwoods ...where no Yankees had yet been and buy farm produce. * * * ...But there was no coffee to be procured; so parched corn, ...parched meal, parched and ground peanuts, and sweet pota...toes cut in small cubes dried and parched and ground were ...used as substitutes. I'm glad I did not have to drink it. The ...homemade sugar was dark, and so was the "homemade" salt.

On July 4, 1863, Vicksburg surrendered, and the next day ...we watched our poor, starved troops march through town. ...Grandmother had a large wash pot full of vegetable soup ...cooked in the yard, and many a poor soldier partook of that ...soup. Her storeroom was always well stocked with grape and ...blackberry wine and cordial, preserves, and pickles; and though she had only corn bread to offer the soldiers, these delicacies accompanied the bread and made it acceptable.

Some time after the battle of Raymond a Yankee soldier came up to our house and said he was sick and asked permission to enter the house. He could have gone to the hospital next door, but I suppose the poor fellow thought of "home and mother" when he saw grandmother sitting on the gallery. He was shaking so hard with the ague that he could hardly talk. Grandmother invited him into the parlor and let him lie on a large sofa and had a servant cover him and give him hot sage tea, and soon the chill left him. I do not remember how long he remained, but he was deeply affected by my grandmother's kindness and was profuse in his thanks to her and took great notice of me.

At the end of the war the very first greenbacks my mother acquired were from the sale of a beautiful silk quilt that she had pieced together. A young Jew started a dry goods store in Raymond and got married, and he gave mother thirty dollars for the quilt, which he gave as a bridal present to his wife. The next greenbacks were from the sale of old Beck and the spring wagon.

Those who have dead buried at Raymond and all friends who can do so should aid the people in the erection of a monument to those who fell in that severe battle on May 12, 1863. Nobler men never went down in battle. The people of that town and vicinity have done well in building at a cost of $4,000 a splendid monument to the dead of Hinds County (see VETERAN for 1908, page 441) and caring for the cemetery in which are the dead of that battle. The grounds are well kept and the place inclosed by handsome iron fence. (See picture.)

The noble women of Raymond have ever been gratefully remembered by survivors of that battle who fought against fearful odds; and when their Chapter—the N. B. Forrest Chapter—is ready to undertake the monument, there should be prompt and zealous coöperation. Mrs. J. R. Eggleston, active then and now, has the cause ardently at heart. Any who may be interested in that cause may learn from her.

WHERE GENERAL ARMISTEAD FELL.—Milton Harding, Asheville, N. C., of Company G, 9th Virginia Infantry, writes: "The June VETERAN contains an account of the part borne by my old commander, Gen. L. A. Armistead, in Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, Pa., July 3, 1863. The account accords with my recollections except in a few minor details. General Armistead evidently received his mortal wound immediately after crossing the stone wall at that point. I was within six feet of him to his left, and observed that he staggered painfully, and could barely keep his feet until he reached the enemy's guns (Cushing's, I think), some sixty feet from the wall, although he continued to lead the charge like the hero he was. As he slapped his left hand on the gun he sank to his knees, and then fell full length to his right. I asked him if I could do anything for him. He requested me to get a small flask of brandy from the satchel he had carried by a strap from his shoulder, and from this he drank a swallow or so. I asked where he was wounded. He replied that he was struck in the breast and arm. In answer to my offer to assist him, he advised me to look out for myself. About that time the enemy recaptured the guns, and I, with others, retreated to the stone wall, where I was taken prisoner. I was carried first to Westminster, Md., and next to Fort McHenry, in Baltimore Harbor, then to Fort Delaware, and later to Point Lookout. In February, 1865, I was exchanged and returned to Richmond.